

From: Susan Skipp
Sent: Saturday, March 29, 2014 7:44 PM
To: Jud Testimony
Cc: Rep. Gonzalez, Minnie
Subject: Testimony for hearing for bill 494

Subject: Connecticut Attorney Endorses "Stranger Danger"

Please after reading this and Ms. Sharon Dornfeld's email, go to <http://www.ctlawtribune.com/id=1202648664975/Opinion%3A-In-Defense-Of-Self-Represented-Litigants#ixzz2xCTf2Y00>

Quite a bit of controversy has been coming to light over Connecticut practices that have been going on for decades. So much so that a legislative task force was mandated to look at practices. Ms. Sharon Dornfeld, was chosen as a co chair for this task force. Please read Ms. Dornfeld's request to her family law peers: she suggesting her peers try to get out of court Monday to oppose an angry disgruntled group of parents. I believe she means the parents who testified January 9 and the climbing number of petitioners to GAL reform. I was at the testimony and gave testimony. I saw no angry parents, no disgruntled parents, just parents who and whose children have been victims of crimes committed by the very institution deemed to be the redress of problems. I signed the petition; it was absent righteous vitriol as well.

What I see in Ms. Dornfeld's email is an attempt to continue the judicial franchise of AFCC racketeering that occurs; Ms. Dornfeld's law practice is AMC and GAL centered.

Note, her email contains no mention of "child's best interest."

The contents in Ms. Dornfeld's email mention concepts that are not included in bill 494. She is misleading her peers in an attempt to further a revenue stream for some unscrupulous judges, attorneys, mental health providers and CSSD workers. The people responsible for drafting this bill and proposing it should not be in public service as it appears they are more interested in self service.

GALS have no statutory basis to be in Superior court, only probate and juvenile courts. This is why someone needs to draft language to omit GALs in family court. Shared parenting absent abuse and neglect is a good idea except many of the "high conflict cases" center around domestic violence issues that current laws and training do not address. Post-judgment custody changes have a due process and jurisdiction in juvenile court for allegations of abuse and neglect. Probate court can be utilized for relocations, that is at least when probate court becomes transparent and lawful as well.

It's imperative for our legislators to work for constituents and the greater good of society. Any legislator who votes for this and is attorney should plan not to be in office next time around because the crimes that occur in family court are coming to light.

Those outrageous stories that could not possibly be real in fact now have credibility, and federal investigations. It's not one, ten, fifty: the victimized are in the hundreds if not thousands. Most are afraid of retaliation. Many people have been retaliated against by GALs and judges as a direct result to their testimonies January 9.

In a subsequent hearing that was promised to be unrecorded so parents who didn't speak could do so without fear of retaliation, the adult daughter of Ms. Dornfeld's co-chair on the task force, Sue Cousineau, came in to that private hearing and videoed and recorded those in attendance to testify.

The system failure is widespread and people are profiting off of the failures to the detriment of families. Ms. Dornfeld's email is a perfect example of the desire of the family law community to continue to profit. 36 hours of training makes a GAL? What can 36 hours of training really do to help any family? Why does an attorney or mental health worker bill \$250-850 per HOUR for something the state values at \$50 an hour? 36 hours of training? People go to real training earning letters after their names and not earn \$50 an hour. Granted, they probably don't destroy children and parents either. 36 hours? A teenage cashier at your local fast food place gets more training.

Please stop this abomination of destroying families and the community. It's time for the Connecticut Bar to clean house and clean out people who make a mockery out of "family" law. Don't forget the Captain's of the ship, the judges. Many of whom were also former GALs.

Thank you,

Susan Skipp

Not angry or disgruntled, just abjectly victimized by the family court system.

From: Sharon Dornfeld [<mailto:attorneydornfeld@hotmail.com>] **Sent:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 2:35 PM **To:** Sharon Dornfeld **Subject:** Please come to the LOB in Hartford on Monday

Dear Family Law colleagues

I know the Monday is a short calendar day and this is short notice, but please make an effort to participate in the public hearing on Raised Bill 494 scheduled for 10 a.m on Monday in Room 1-D of the Legislative Office Building.

In case you haven't followed what's been going on in the legislature, a bill was introduced last year which would have eliminated joint custody in favor of a presumption of shared custody, which morphed into a Task Force to study custody and GALs, which became the focus of a group of extremely disgruntled litigants. They are experts at social media, have been cold-calling litigants and "warning" them about GALs, are "court watching" cases in an attempt to intimidate judges, GALs, and lawyers, and have organized personal attacks and filings of grievances against judges, lawyers, and our mental health professional colleagues. They want to

destroy the entire system. And they have found a few sympathetic but uninformed legislators, who led an attack on the reappointment of family judges.

RB 494 was introduced yesterday which would codify some of the Task Force recommendations, from both the majority and minority reports. Here's the bill:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/TOB/S/2014SB-00494-R00-SB.htm>

This bill, and all other pending family law bills, are up for hearing before the judiciary committee this [coming Monday, March 31, at 10 a.m.](#) The disgruntled group--calling themselves "Coalition for Connecticut Family Court Reform"--will be out in droves. Wearing T-shirts.

We need to be a big presence as well.

Here's how to help:

1) SHOW UP on Monday, whether or not you are willing to testify. The hearing is likely to last into the evening, so come after you get out of court and/or leave when you need to. You may want to bring a book or some work. Bodies are important as a visible sign that not everyone thinks the system should be totally destroyed. Here's how to get to the LOB:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/DrivingDirections.asp>. If the Parking Garage is full (which is likely), there's a pay garage in a commercial building on Oak Street opposite the entrance to the Appellate Clerk's office.

2) Prepare TESTIMONY, either ORAL OR WRITTEN. If you're willing to testify in person, sign up to do so in Room 2500 beginning [at 8:00 a.m.](#) Unfortunately, there is a lottery system for the testimony and there is no guarantee when you'll be called. Oral testimony is limited to 3 minutes. If you can't come and/or don't want to testify orally, submit written testimony. Be sure to lead with the Bill number (RB 494) and state whether you support or oppose it.

The Family Law Section generally supports the bill, but is concerned that Section 1 (b) does not provide for the immediate appointment of counsel or a GAL in restraining order and ex parte application situations, Section 4 does not limit the frequency with which motions seeking the removal of a GAL can be filed and whether denied motions remain in the file, that Section 5 (a) would make state rates mandatory in any case in which the kids ever were on HUSKY, that Section 5 (b) needs a more specific definition of "college savings account", and that Sections 5 (c) and (d) would permit *ex post facto* reductions of AMC and GAL fees without regard to the parents' own resources and what they have agreed to pay their own counsel.

Testimony can also be submitted for a day or two after the hearing. Submit it here:

JUD.Testimony@cga.ct.gov

3) CONTACT members of the Judiciary Committee, especially if you are a constituent or know someone personally. Ask other people--lawyers and clients--to speak/email with their representatives and others they may know up there. Here is the list of committee members and

their contact info (email by clicking the little envelope; go to the members' websites for phone numbers by clicking on the "web" symbol):

http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/MemberList.asp?comm_code=JUD.

4) WATCH the public hearing if you can't attend in person at CT-N.com. And then FOLLOW what's happening as the bill continues through the process. Late amendments are always a possibility. You may need to be in touch with the legislators serving your own districts when the bill comes up for a vote by the House and Senate. Find your own legislator here:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/CGAFindLeg.asp>

Hartford is a distance for many of you, it's a short calendar day, there may not be convenient parking, and this is short notice. Come anyway.

Thanks.

Sharon Dornfeld

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